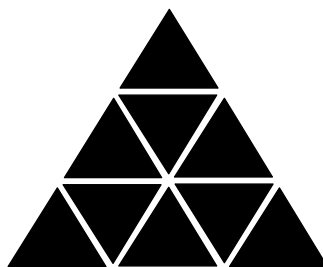# *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*
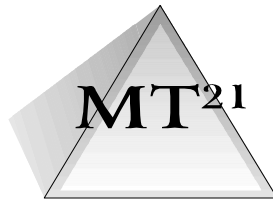
## INTRODUCTION

The theme of the *1998-99 Information Technology Plan* is "Preparing Montana for the 21st Century — MT²¹." This theme builds on the concept stressed in the *1996-97 Information Technology Plan*, namely, the importance of establishing a strong, cohesive Information Technology (IT) enterprise. A strong IT enterprise provides the appropriate organization and tools to enable state agencies to focus on core business competencies and to efficiently deliver information and services to Montana's citizens. The last biennial plan used the segmented triangle shown below to depict the IT enterprise.

State agencies continue to take bold steps in using IT to meet business needs and prepare Montana for the 21st century. In response to this progress, this year's biennial plan presents the enterprise as a three-dimensional triangle — an enterprise that will meet the MT²¹ challenge through: sponsorship, vision, and planning.

MT²¹

IT sponsorship comes from the citizens' representatives — the legislators. Montana's legislative body supports the IT enterprise by: participating on IT committees; enacting IT statute; and appropriating funds for IT initiatives.

The vision for using IT to achieve efficient and effective government services comes from the legislature and top management in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. This vision is vital to empowering Montana, because without vision and direction, the IT enterprise can struggle in a status quo, non-progressive, reactive mode with little return on technology investments.

Emphasized throughout this document is the planning dimension, which includes: describing the current IT environment (Section I); reporting on strategic planning initiatives and progress (Section II); and listing Information Services Division (ISD), agency, and university IT plans for 1998-99 (Section III).

# BIENNIAL PLAN SECTIONS

*Section 1 describes the current IT environment in terms of the enterprise organization, state IT expenditures, and the current information technology architecture.*

▲ The enterprise organization provides the foundation that supports state IT activity. This enterprise organization consists of several executive- and management-level entities. The primary of these are the: Information Technology Advisory Council (ITAC); SummitNet Executive Council (SEC); Information Technology Managers' Group (ITMG); ISD; and agency IT organizations.

▲ State IT expenditures, gathered from fiscal year 1996 disbursements, are depicted for seven IT-spending categories: Personnel, Training, Hardware, Software, Telecommunications, Maintenance, Contracted Services, and Miscellaneous/Other.

▲ The current information technology architecture (ITA) describes the IT components required to meet the state's business needs. Major components of the state's ITA are: Computing Platforms, Enterprise Software Systems, and Telecommunications Networking.

*Section 2 details the enterprise strategic planning efforts undertaken during*

*the last biennium.* Through the creation of legislative-, executive-, and management-level committees and task forces, many enterprise IT issues have been addressed.

▲ An interim legislative-level committee was created by Senate Joint Resolution No. 23 to explore options for the revision of laws governing state fiscal and personnel management, and to provide an estimated schedule for the transition to fully integrated asset-management systems. The Governor's Blue Ribbon Telecommunications Task Force was charged to examine the state's telecommunications infrastructure, and make recommendations to ensure the implementation of policies, practices, and statutes regarding access to advanced telecommunication services.

▲ Following the 1993 strategic planning effort, ITAC addressed executive-level IT issues through the creation of these task forces: Coordination Task Force; Access and Privacy Task Force; Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Task Force; and Internet Policy and Services Advisory Task Force. In addition, The SummitNet Executive Council was formed in July 1995, by Executive Order of the Governor, to provide policy-level direction for matters relating to SummitNet.

▲ Two ITMG management-level subcommittees, created in the past biennium, have supported strategic initiatives: 1) the Imaging Subcommittee's mission was to establish imaging and document management policies and standards, and 2) the E-mail Subcommittee's purpose was to establish a state e-mail strategy.

*Section 3 provides ISD, Agency, and University IT Plans.*

▲ These IT plans detail each organization's mission, major projects for the upcoming biennium, the business goals these projects support, and accomplishments from the previous biennium.

▲ A project profile table provides details, when available, for agencies' FY98-99 IT projects. Included is information relating to platform type, implementation schedules, emerging technologies used, new project resources and associated costs, statutory changes, and public access.

# PREPARING FOR THE 21ˢᵗ CENTURY

Preparing Montana for the 21ˢᵗ century will not be an easy task — it will require:

▲ commitment and financial support from the legislature and top management;

- ▲ dedication and hard work from all employees;
- ▲ the IT enterprise to partner with the business and non-profit community;

- ▲ the IT enterprise to understand the business needs of the State of Montana, as well as the needs and expectations of the citizens it serves; and

- ▲ comprehensive, progressive, and continuous IT strategic planning that forces the planners and participants to ask:  "Where are we now?"; "What issues or problems need to be resolved?"; "Where do we need to be, and what do we need to look like to meet the business needs of the future?"; "What strategies need to be developed for us to reach this future vision?"; and "What action needs to occur to implement these strategies?"

Preparing Montana for the 21st century will not be easy; however, it is vital.  The state's IT enterprise presents this biennial plan as one step in meeting this challenge.